EDUCATION REFORM : THE NATIONAL INITIATIVE IN BRITAIN

Ⅰ．特別寄稿論文

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INTRODUCTION

A National Curriculum with national assessment of the performance of pupils and greater emphasis on parental choice of schools are the keynotes of the British government's current legislative proposals for education. Intended to alter the purposes and responsiveness of the education service for the coming decade and the next century, the Education Reform Bill re-constitutes a governance of education which has been in place since 1944. The Bill re-defines the relationships between central and local government, between parents and teachers in the unending debate over educational purposes and practices, doing so through a set of changes which envisage both the greater use of administrative authority over teachers while at the same time drawing upon the discipline of the market to strengthen the accountability of teachers to parents.

The apparent tension between a more heavily administered curriculum and a market-influenced approach to school choice provides the analytical focus of this paper. It will be concerned with exploring how their inter-action in the new government of education depends upon the administrative rules which regulate relationships and choices, the nature and availability of information for clients and administrators and, fundamentally, whether it is the vision of consumer democracy or that of social democracy which more accurately mirrors our private conception of our social selves.

These issues will be explored in two stages. In the section which follows an account is given of the changes relating to schools which are contained in the Bill, and some analysis is offered both of the administrative rules which are emerging and the nature of the information to be made available to clients and administrators. It provides the basis for the subsequent section. This will consider how the conception of the individual differs between those who have a vision of a consumer democracy as against those who remain committed to ideas of social democracy, albeit re-defined from the collectivist tradition of much of the post-war years. The validity of the model of humanity underlying these conceptions of the state will be discussed.

THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSALS

The National Curriculum

In the 1987 General Election all mainstream political parties advocated policies designed to deliver a national curriculum for schools. While parties differed as to the structure, content and assessment of such a curriculum, it is an approach to educational provision which reflects a view that there is common set of experiences which is relevant to the preparation of young people for entering the larger social and economic community of which they are a part as well as its future.

Introducing its proposals the Government argued that, despite improvements in curriculum provision in many schools and school systems (Local Education Authorities or LEAs), in too many schools standards of attainment did not equip young people '...with the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need for adult life and employment' (DES, 1987a). A national

curriculum, linked to regular programmes of assessment, is designed to raise standards by

(i) ensuring that all pupils study a broad and balanced range of subjects throughout their compulsory schooling...
(ii) setting clear objectives for what children over the full range of ability should be able to achieve...
(iii) ensuring that all pupils...have access to broadly the same good and relevant curriculum...
(iv) checking on progress towards those objectives and performance achieved at various stages...(ibid.)

However, raising standards is only one part of the government's purpose. A common curriculum will also facilitiate population mobility and the accountability of teachers. It will

(i) secure that the curriculum in all maintained schools has sufficient in common to enable children to move from one area of the country to another with minimum disruption to their education...
(ii) enable schools to be more accountable for the education they offer...Parents will be able to judge their children's progress against agreed national targets for attainment and will also be able to judge the effectiveness of their school...(ibid.)

The curriculum is defined in terms of subjects with Maths, English and science forming the core. Other foundation subjects include a modern foreign language, technology, history, geography, art, music and physical education. These foundation subjects will occupy about 70 per cent of the curriculum and programmes of study are to be prepared for each subject. Programmes are intended to define minimum content and competencies and are not expected to occupy all the time available to a subject. Pupils will be assessed on their performance within these programmes of study at ages 7, 11, 14 and 16 and, for the core subjects, attainment targets will be set in order to '...establish what children should normally be expected to know, understand and be able to do at around the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16.

Despite cross-party support for a national curriculum some of the detailed proposals of the government have received much criticism. One target for criticism is that the Bill defines the curriculum in terms of subjects, thus limiting the flexibility of schools in organising the curriculum in ways which cut across traditional subject boundaries. Indicative of the debate over the degree of flexibility allowed by the proposals are the views of Bill Walton, the Chief Education Officer of Sheffield, and Eric Bolton, the Senior Chief Inspector of the national schools inspectorate. Walton (1988) interprets the Bill as being very restrictive, inhibiting the ability of schools to take ownership of change and innovate in ways which, while working within an LEA's curriculum policy, allows schools to respond positively to local needs. Bolton (1988) gives emphasis to the professional discretion allowed by the proposals, suggesting that there is much scope for curriculum flexibility. Indeed, the national curriculum could become a 'Frankenstein' if the '...sensible and constructive professional voice of education did not make itself heard'. He is also less sanguine about current standards and methods which include, he says, too many examples of overly prescriptive teaching, teaching to the exam and 'massive' testing in primary schools.

However, the strongest criticism has been directed at the proposals for national assessment and the publication of results on a school-by-school basis. Murphy (1988) offers a six-point critique:

(a) The purpose of the tests is confused - the results are almost certain therefore to be misused.
(b) The attainment targets will not encapsulate more than isolated fragments of the whole national curriculum.
(c) The tests are bound to encourage an extremely narrow approach to teaching and learning, even with respect to the broad aims of the national curriculum.

(d) There is little justification for prescribing attainment targets is relation to fixed ages. Optimum attainment levels should be recorded and rewarded regardless of the age when they are reached by individual pupils.
(e) The assessment system is likely to be dominated by 'nationally prescribed tests' to the detriment of the assessments to be carried out by teachers.
(f) The pressure to keep the proposed system simple is likely to result in the worst kind of norm-referenced tests which will produce results, on a three (or five) point grading scale, which will convey little or no information in relation to the attainment targets anyway.

This critique of the consultation paper and the Bill provides a helpful template against which to evaluate the effects of the administrative process which will convert grand policy into practice. It is through these processes that the professional voice will be heard as their expertise is drawn upon to develop the detail of practice. And already some of the criticisms [for example (d) to (f)] must be moderated in view of the recommendations of the Task Group on Assessment and Testing (DES, 1988), set up by the Secretary of State to advise on the framework for the national assessment.

The TGAT Report gives considerable emphasis to the role of classroom teachers in the assessment process. Testing is viewed as having diagnostic and formative purposes, complmenting the teacher's central role as a facilitator of learning. The Report appears to have resisted the pressure for excessive simplicity, although the process of aggregation to provide published results on school performance will require a simplification of the information available for individuals. It has also avoided the prescription of attainment targets for fixed ages, proposing a series of ten levels of attainment which are less rigorously linked to age.

The Report is less convincing in attempting to control the misuse of the results [(Murphy's item (a)] , particularly the use of data to evaluate school performance. The Report shows an awareness that summative and aggregated results of the performance of pupils in one school is not the same as a statement of whether the teachers in that school have been successful or unsuccessful. While summative information on the pupil is relevant - for example, to an employer or a university - it is not the relevant criterion for assessing teacher performance. The relevant criterion for evaluating the performance of teachers and schools is the learning value-added achieved by pupils, a measure which needs to take account of intake differences between schools. The Report recommends that

> The only form in which results of national assessment for, and identifying, a given school should be published should be as part of a broader report by that school of its work as a whole. (ibid.)

This broader report would comment upon the nature of the socio-economic area from which the schools draws its intake. It is not persuaded of the case for adjusting figures to take account of social deprivation.

This is a misguided response which is quite inadequate for measuring the performance of schools. The learning value-added performance of schools can only begin to be properly addressed through information specific to the intake. The previous histories of two comprehensive schools drawing upon the same catchment may still influence rescruitment. If one had been selective and the other non-selective, later intakes could still be skewed and influence the outcomes. More attention is needed on finding ways of controlling for the quality of the intake already in the school.

It may be that further change will take place on the means of controlling for differences in the intake of pupils before school performance data is published. Work continues on this problem in the Statistics Branch of the DES; in addition a DES working group, composed of LEA Chief Education Officers, is working on performance indicators; the DES has also recently commissioned management consultants to examine the information base needed for a greater use of performance indicators on schools. Beyond that, further change may be expected as national reports and recommendations are translated into detailed LEA and school plans.

The Report fails to calm anxieties about items (b) and (c) in Murphy's list, although it may be expecting too much of a single report to overcome all the concerns voiced about the national assessments. However, what the Report does show is the beginning of that process of change which policy so often undergoes between declaration and implementation. Indicative of this is evidence of disagreement between the Prime Minister and her Secretary of State for Education - in a private letter from the Prime Minister's office leaked to the press in mid-March - about the acceptability of the Report's emphasis on the role of the teacher in testing, the need for a complex formative approach to the task and the resource implications of sophisticated assessment procedure (TES, 1988).

Similar processes of change through the expression of professional and local preference may be expected as the changes in the local management of schools are introduced.

Local Management of Schools

The local management of schools initiative contrasts with the centralisation of the curriculum and the creation of new national administrative structures to monitor the performance of schools on the programmes of study. This initiative is an integrated package of five changes which will facilitate greater accountability of schools to parents and the local community. However, the package is also incomplete. It is left to LEAs to define the rules for local schemes of management, although the Secretary of State has the final power of approval and may amend LEA proposals after consultation. As will be exemplified in the following discussion, this local discretion may have a powerful influence in determining outcomes.

Open enrolment is the first item in the local package of choice and accountability. The Bill introduces the concept of the standard number. This is the number of pupils in a year group which a school will be required to admit if there is that level of demand for places in a year group. It is a change which increases the scope for choice of school and reduces the powers of the LEA to manage admissions. LEAs will no longer be able to set an admissions limit up to twenty per cent below the capacity of a school. Perhaps less satisfactory, an LEA will not be able to manage admissions to a new school serving a new residential area as a means of enabling the local community to gain access to that school as a neighbourhood school.

How these changes affect a specific school will depend in part upon the relationship between actual enrolment and the standard number in that

school and other schools in the same neighbourhood. Where there is a close match between admissions and standard numbers, open enrolment will raise fewer problems than in neighbourhoods where there is considerable surplus capacity.

However, the level of competition which open enrolment generates may also depend upon the relationships between schools and the management culture nurtured by a local authority. Where there is an emphasis on collaboration between schools in the local neighbourhood and where the LEA emphasises a collective approach to the management of educational opportunity, schools may not necessarily become more competitive when operating under this new set of rules. In the context of the other elements of the local management package there may even be grounds for LEA officers encouraging this type of approach where it does not already exist.

Local management of staff

The Bill gives to boards of governors of individual schools the powers of appointment, suspension and dismissal of teaching and non-teaching staff attached to the school and paid from the delegated school budget. These powers radically extend the powers and responsibility of governors re-defined as recently as the 1986 Education Act. They place major limitations on the powers of LEAs over staff, although the LEA remains the employer.

Much of the focus of accountability in the Bill is on the teachers and, if they cannot respond successfully, their claim to employment would seem to be forfeit. In a funding system which will be largely pupil-driven, fewer

pupils will mean less money and will require schools to dismiss teachers in post. Where this occurs, the Bill overrides any local 'no redundancy' agreements with teacher unions, so that the teacher cannot simply be kept in post. Our understanding of the Bill and the accompanying 'Notes on Clauses' (House of Commons, 1988) suggest that a dismissal from a school will be a redundancy. Clearly, one might expect processes to be developed within LEAs whereby teachers 'volunteer' to move to another school before being formally dismissed. However, the viability of such agreements will depend upon the willingness of governors of other schools agreeing to take such a teacher and it is on this issue that concern about redundancy must arise. As with open enrolment, the 'management culture' of the LEA, its relationships with schools and the relationships of schools to each other are likely to influence the way this change works in practice. Nevertheless, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the formula funding process will lead to teacher redundancies.

Formula funding

At the core of local management schemes will be formulae for the distribution of resources. Clause 27 of the Bill envisages that special needs be taken into account in developing a formula, which

> shall include provision for taking into account, in the case of each school...the number and ages of registered pupils... and may include provision for taking into account any other factors affecting the needs of individual schools which are subject to variation from school to school

The Bill does not specify the factors which may be taken into account when defining the needs of individual pupils and schools, reflecting the aim of the consultation paper that these are for the LEAs to determine; nevertheless, the DES does plan to issue notes of guidance, probably during

Summer, 1988. On several occasions, civil servants with responsibilities in this field have emphasised that it is for LEAs to propose a formula as part of their delegation scheme. Nevertheless, the DES' consultation paper (DES, 1987b) does suggest that, in addition to the number and age of pupils, other factors might include differential social need and different types and sizes of schools.

Summary statements in consultation documents can avoid the complexities of formula funding; however, there can be little doubt that it is an approach which will create great difficulties for an education system which, typically, does not know the costs of individual schools. Even the leading exponents of school-site management in England and Wales (Cambridgeshire and Solihull) have managed their schemes by basing resourcing on historical costs.

As the Bill also requires LEAs to consult with the governing bodies of schools before deciding upon the elements of their formula, what is proposed is not only a major change in the techniques and processes for formulating budgets but also in the cast of characters required to take some part in the decisions. This move to an explicit and public formula funding approach, defining the unit costs of pupils, will make it almost inevitable that LEAs will have to address the value basis of its decisions. It will mean an end to the considerable discretion education officers have often had in allocating resources to different schools.

The change in the people involved in deciding the distribution of resources is also likely to influence spending priorities. Will the change lead to

more or less support for younger pupils? Will governing bodies tend to favour generous support for small schools or will they wish to concentrate support for larger schools? Will the process of consultation lead to more or less support for children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds? Answers to these questions will determine how pupils and/or schools are weighted, a concept which shows that the apparently remote and unexciting concept of a funding formula is not neutral in its effects. They are not intended to be neutral. The purpose of weighting a formula is to ensure that more resources go to groups defined as having greater need, however need might be defined.

The Annex to this paper gives examples of formulae recently developed by two LEAs in the south of England. Both LEAs have tended to be controlled by centre-right political groupings, yet the formulae reflect somewhat different judgements about special and additional needs. Are these examples of formulae indicative of a diverse pattern of future formula-resourcing, each representing local judgements about educational needs and preferences? A school system more strongly geared to client choice will still be resourced through political processes which articulate social preferences and it remains to be seen whether the outcome expresses the preferences of those with a vision of consumer democracy or social democracy.

In any event client choices are intended to be more informed than under the present system and, in many respects, the locus of decision-making closer to the parent as client.

Financial delegation

The formula-determined budget will be managed at the level of the school, enabling governors and teachers to switch spending in ways which reflect their judgements of resource needs. Whether their judgements are always better than those more distanced from the school has rarely been questioned (see Thomas, 1987), despite the contradiction suggested by the opposite trend of curriculum policy.

The practice of school-site management was pioneered in the UK by Solihull (Humphrey and Thomas, forthcoming) and Cambridgeshire (Downes, 1988) as a means of getting better value for money from the educational budget. Local control of the budget has been popular with the schools included in these schemes but there are important differences between them and the government's proposals for a national extension of financial delegation. First, the voluntary principle is lost and will mean that some LEAs will have to introduce financial delegation who may be hostile to the principle. More fundamentally, financial delegation is only one part of the larger package of local management; open enrolment, formula funding and delegation to governors of powers of appointment, suspension and dismissal reconstructs the relationship between parents, teachers and local authorities in ways which are quite different from the value for money emphasis of existing financial delegation programmes.

It is the government which has added the emphasis on accountability to the idea of financial delegation. The Bill will require schools to '...publish information on actual expenditure at each school, which could then be

compared to the original plans' (DES, 1987b). This information will complement other performance indicators from the national assessment.

School performance

The relationship between the budget and performance on the national assessment is made clear in the consultation paper on financial delegation.

> At the end of the year the LEA would be required to publish information on actual expenditure at each school, which could be compared to the original plans. This information together with that required of governors relating to the achievement of the national curriculum would provide the basis on which parents could evaluate whether best use had been made of the resources available to the governors (DES, 1987b).

While it is right and proper that a local community should receive information on the costs of education, the resource decisions of governors and the use of those resources in schools, there are grounds for concern about the quality of the information on performance which may emerge. There is no reason to repeat the points raised earlier in the discussion on the national curriculum but it is important to emphasise that schools might be expected to be accountable for what they do with the human and physical resources they receive but not for the original quality of those resources.

What will be created through the proposed structures and processes of the national curriculum, national assessment and local management is a system of locally provided education which, within a national framework of curriculum objectives, will be more accountable to parents for the quality of its delivery. Parents will receive information of a more systematic nature about school performance and ending the controls on enrolment will enable them to 'vote with their feet', taking children from schools which, in their judgement, are not successful. Pupil-related funding will

emphasise the accountability of schools, funds declining in step with enrolment and leading to the dismissal of teachers. If these new pressures are insufficient in making LEA owned schools more responsive to parents, the third strand of the government's proposals is the creation of an alternative sector of centrally funded schools which will be in direct competition with the LEA sector.

Grant maintained schools

The Bill will allow the governors of all secondary schools, and primary schools with more than 300 registered pupils, to apply to the Secretary of State for maintenance by grant from central government and to cease to be owned and maintained by the LEA. It is seen by the government as adding

> ..a new and powerful dimension to the ability of parents to exercise choice within the publicly provided sector of education. The greater diversity of provision which will result should enhance the prospect of improving education standards in all schools. Parents and local communities would have new opportunities to secure the development of their schools in ways appropriate to the needs of their children and in accordance with their wishes, within the legal framework of a national curriculum (DES, 1987c).

The proposal has been unpopular with most of what might be termed the 'eduacation establishment'. Concern has been expressed that the grant maintained proposal may be used as a means of introducing selective schooling in areas which have established systems of comprehensive schools. This has not been calmed by assurances - not included in the Bill itself - that a school would not be allowed to alter its admissions requirements for a period of five years. There is also anxiety that the government may ensure that grant maintained schools are better funded than their local counterparts, making the opting-out alternative more attractive. If this weakens the ability of LEAs to offer an attractive alternative it would

contribute to them 'withering on the vine' and becoming a redundant tier of education government and administration, fulfilling some of the hopes of those, such as Stuart Sexton (1987), who have advised government on this package of measures.

The Bill is certain to become an Act of Parliament and, having already completed most stages in the House of Commons, it is not likely to be subject to substantive amendment. It creates a framework which enables LEA maintained schools to directly compete with each other and it also allows the development of an alternative centrally funded sector which can compete with local provision. When all are tied together by a funding formula based upon the unit cost of schooling, the foundations exist for the introduction of a system of educational vouchers for funding compulsory education. Whether or not this is introduced by some future Parliament, the Bill itself allows a greater degree of parent choice over schools than has hitherto been the case. How these powers manifest themselves in terms of outcomes will, in the last analysis, depend upon our private view of our social selves.

CONSUMER DEMOCRACY *VS.* SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

The Education Reform Bill is a centerpiece in the constituting of a new moral and political order of individual rights and private choice, where the public accountability of government is to the private individual as consumer not citizen (Ranson, 1986, 1988). 'There are only individual people with their own individual lives' argues Nozick (1974). Individuals are morally self-sufficient and their dignity derives from expressing their unique individuality. What property and skills they possess they are

entitled to keep and deploy as they choose. These are natural, inalienable rights, as Locke proposed. The notion of Rawls (1972) that inherited skill forms a common asset to mankind is unintelligible according to this perspective.

The general well-being of society is best served when individuals are allowed to pursue their self-interest. Although individuals only enter society and form associations to further their self-interest, nevertheless, the unintended consequence - guided by the hidden hand - is the general well-being of all in society. When individuals are free to compete with each other in the market place they can exchange goods and services to mutual advantage while the efficiency of this allocation secures benefit for all.

If individuals are to acquire the necessary freedom to calculate their interests then government needs to be constrained. For some (for example, Nozick) the 'minimal state' should be '..limited to the narrow function of protection against force, fraud, enforcement of contracts, and so on' (op. cit.). Others, such as Bentham, believe that if the market place is to be protected then the state requires a few extra powers to regulate the deviations of social misfits. The surveillance of the panopticon has its place.

The legitimacy of this moral order derives from its protection of individual interests but also from enabling freedom of choice. The values encourage an active polity whose members are conceived not as passive, dependent, creatures but as agents reflecting upon and actively developing

their interests. Government is made to serve and to account to the market place.

What emerges is a view of the public servant as one concerned with goals such as high salary, perquisites of office, power and patronage rather than efficiency (Mueller, 1979). The logic is the need to explore decision-making in the political arena with the aim of enhancing consumer control of public decisions by introducing rules which seek to mimic market behaviour. The Public Choice literature (see Mueller, 1979) is, in large part, a product of concern that without appropriate regulation public servants will have little incentive to act in the collective interest.

Commenting from the perspective of British social administration, Judge (1979) accepts that the Public Choice approach encourages a healthy scepticism that public expenditure is intrinsically good and recognises that '...it is becoming clear that many of the so-called benefits, if there are benefits, of welfare expenditure leak out to the producer groups providing welfare services'. From this he concludes that there is a case for reconsidering traditional pricing solutions in order to increase consumer participation. More interestingly, he suggests that this leakage is to providers in the private as well as the public sectors. He then goes on to challenge the initial individual behavioural postulates of the public choice theorists, suggesting that '...the present set of simplistic assumptions about the motivations of producer groups, such as bureaucrats in the Civil Service, does more harm than good in trying to convince people of the utility of the public choice approach'.

The Public Choice critique of the motivations of public officials is part of the larger critique of the state. The idea that the general well-being of society is best served when private individuals are allowed to pursue their self-interest leads to a rejection '...of any kind of organic theory of the state which superimposes higher 'values' on those individuals' (Wiseman, 1979).

The Education Reform Bill is to to be welcomed and acclaimed for its major innovation in encouraging and facilitiating the more active role for the clients of the education system, which derives from the conception of man in society upon which it has been constructed. However, because the conception of humanity which underpins this social order may be fundamentally flawed, the final outcomes of the changes are less certain.

The model of humanity upon which rests the postulate of self-interest ignores the moral issues which necessarily arise from the context of people as social animals. As a result, the analysis fails to take account of the contribution of social decisions to efficiency and welfare. It is in this social context that Sen (1972) develops the implications for morality of the assumption of 'economic man' - concerned with maximising self-interest - as rational. Rationality, he says, is a concept which seems to belong to the relationship between choices and preferences and raises no reason for discriminating between one type of preference and another. Morality, on the other hand, would require a judgement among preferences. 'Thus viewed, the assertion that the dictates of morality need not coincide with those of rationality might appear to be trivial (ibid.) He suggests two reasons why this is not so. The first is where the outcomes of choices

depend on others. These are circumstances where there is no immediate translation between an individual's preferences and outcomes, and judgements are needed about the actions and preferences of others. The second is the case where individual rationality leads to inferior outcomes, such as the case of the 'Prisoner's Dilemma'. Escaping from this through the idea of collective rationality '...would involve ideas that relate to the concept of morality' (ibid.). Calculatons about choice where outcomes depend upon others take on a moral aspect which is relevant to the calculation of the best course of action. In many circumstances, '...if all pursued dictates of morality rather than rationally pursuing their own self-interest, all would have been better off' (ibid.). This is to argue that morality plays a role in attaining social optimality and can also lead to circumstances where there can be '...a dichotomy between revealed preference and welfare..'(ibid.).

The argument can be illustrated through an example of school choice. The preference of a parent for a school, privately expressed, together with the unwitting choices of others will alter the service offered from that anticipated. As a small school grows in size it is not without consequence for the learning and administrative process. The distinctive ethos which may have been the reason for the choice may be altered by the choice.

The theorising of Public Choice rests on the proposition that the maximising of scoial welfare is based on the dual link between choice (behaviour) and preference on the one hand and preference and welfare on the other - the individual knows best his welfare function. However,

through examples like the Prisoners' Dilemma we see that an individual's welfare may best be maximised through choices (behaviour) which do not necessarily represent his preferences. Moreover, individuals often act on these bases because they are social animals governed by social norms and rules of behaviour. It is as a consequence of this that non-economic ways of encouraging certain behaviour may, in some circumstances, be as or more effective than economic means; examples might be ethical persuasion, political debate and moral argument (Sen, 1973).

Cases where individuals make choices because of some moral norm, such as a sense of social responsibility, breaks the dual link between choice and personal welfare. As Brittan (1985) argues, if choice and preference are to have any non-tautological meaning it must make sense to say that '...if you sacrifice a holiday to look after a sick relative, you are subordinating what you would <u>like</u> to do to what you think you <u>ought</u> to do'.

In a further paper, Sen (1977) develops the idea of individuals acting outside their self-interest, and proposes the separate concepts of 'sympathy' and 'commitment' as means of classifying such actions. 'Sympathy' is a case of 'externality' and could, therefore, be incorporated ino the standard models of welfare economics. It includes those cases where an event which does not directly affect the indiviudal reduces his welfare; an example of 'sympathy' would be where the knowledge of torture to someone else makes you feel sick. 'Commitment', on the other hand, cannot be interpreted into the standard models. An example would be where the thought of torture to someone else does not make you feel sick but you believe it is wrong and are prepared to do something to stop it. 'One way

of defining commitment is in terms of a person choosing an act that he believes will yield a lower level of personal welfare to him than an alternative that is also available to him' (ibid.). Commitiment is a case of 'counterpreferential choice' and is closely connected with an individual's moral code. It is a concept which is of particular importance for the judgements that people make about public goods and '...drives a wedge between personal choice and personal welfare..'(ibid.).

This is an analysis which challenges the view of 'economic man' taken by Public Choice economists, such as Buchanan and Wiseman, that people are only as honest as their economic interests allows. It brings into question the concerns of Public Choice theorists to develop rules to cope with, for example, the 'free rider' problem, where, in the case of subscription schemes for public projects, it is assumed that '..it is in everybody's interest to understate the benefit..' the individual's expects from the project (Sen, ibid.). It raises fascinating questions about the outcomes of the Education Reform Bill in terms of private interest and social choice.

CONCLUSION: THE AGENDA OF SOCIAL CHOICE

It does not clarify the political agenda of educational change in Britain and elsewhere to polarise discussion as though choice lies between market and non-market alternatives. Certainly, the Education Reform Bill strengthens the role of client groups and weakens those of local providers as against central government but the system remains heavily administered. Important rules remain to be determined through political and administrative processes and it is the task of government to define the

relationships between groups of clients and providers. As Kerchner and Boyd (1987) observe: 'The reality of public policy in education is the satisfaction of multiple values, and the use of a mixture of market and bureaucratic educational production'.

The main part of this paper, while describing the changes proposed for schools in the Bill, identified areas of uncertainty and flexibility where collective choice will determine the 'rules of the game'. It is for LEAs to prepare, after consultation with governing bodies, the schemes of financial delegation and the formula by which resources will be distributed to schools. The funding formula is a key instrument for declaring local valuations of educational needs, enabling LEAs to commit extra resources to the education of disadvataged children. LEAs will also have the option of giving more resources to small schools to help them overcome some of the disadvantages of smallness. Using Sen's terminology, some of those decisions may arise because of 'sympathy' but others may reflect 'commitment'.

By widening the opportunities for parental choice, the Bill creates a framework for increased competition among schools and it is likely that some schools may develop more active marketing strategies. Yet the level and nature of that competition may be moderated by LEAs, governors and teachers who may view time spent on marketing as a loss of time spent delivering a quality education. Following dictates of morality and 'commitment' to the quality of education for all children in an LEA some schools may not emphasise competition because it may threaten the future and vitality of schools other than its own.

To what extent will information on school performance be contextualised to take account of the nature of the intake, a necessary condition if teachers are to held accountable for their own actions rather than the quality of the raw material which enters the school? The paper reports that this question is as yet unresolved and it remains to be seen whether professional concerns are taken into account in the evolution of policytowards practice. Dependent upon the outcomes will be the quality and reliability of information provided to parents about school performance. Raw data flatters most and matters least for pupils and schools in high income communities; it will be a further test of our social morality whether genuine attempts are made to control for school intake differences when publishing data on school performance.

A proper conception of humanity as social animals with moral concerns challenges the Public Choice model which characterises '...human motivation in such spectacularly narrow terms' (Sen, 1987). It enables us to conceive a future for education in Britain which can still offer support for the disadvantaged and the needy while improving the quality of education for all. Much will depend upon the moral concerns of the nation's citizenry whose role, necessarily, becomes more active in the new governance of education. The Education Reform Bill means that it is their private concerns and judgements about the nation's educational welfare needs which will determine the future pattern of educational opportunity in Britain.

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Annex: Examples of formula funding

Model One

Four components:

(1) Basic need based on unit cost (£)	
11 to 16	1,115
16+	1,790
(2) Pupils with special needs (£)	
11 to 16	Basic + 446
16+	Basic + 1,146
(3) Additional needs - pupils from families with special needs (£)	
11 to 16	Basic + 669
16+	Basic + 1,718
(4) School size factor - for small schools (£)	
11 to 16	Basic + 112

Model Two

Four components:

(1) Basic need based on unit cost (£)	
16+	920
(2) Schools serving a low income area (£)	
For each child entitled to a free meal	Basic + 95
(3) Schools with high levels of pupil turnover (£)	
An amount per pupil for every pupil in excess of 15% (total of incoming and outgoing) of pupils in Years 1 to 4 only	Basic + 70
(4) School size factor - for small schools (£)	
Per pupil for every pupil below 900	Basic + 120